

## SUMMARY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONFERENCE CALLS

December 6-7, 2005

**Q. What are the financial logistics of a planning grant, what are the allowable costs? Is it the same case that the agency pays the individual their salary and benefits and then are reimbursed by the corporation at 100%? Can this include both a coordinator for the AmeriCorps proposal and a part time person to work with our fiscal manager?**

A. The AmeriCorps grant funds are reimbursable. This means that the agency pays the program expenses, including member living allowances, and submits invoices to the OFBCI for reimbursement of allowable expenses. In the case of program staff salary and other personnel expenses, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) reimburses up to 100% of program personnel expenses, within reason. There are no set criteria for determining the program staff mix. Your organization has the flexibility to determine the best fit for your organization.

**Q. In the section entitled “Additional Required Information” it states that a “Program Evaluation” needs to be submitted with the application. I have read the corresponding sections discussing this in 45 C.F.R. However, is this “Program Evaluation” different from Appendix D “Performance Measures”? Do we need to develop a separate logic model to demonstrate the evaluation plan? Please help us understand how these two sections are different.**

A. This section refers to any program evaluations that have been conducted prior to the application that can be referenced or included as supplemental information and usually applies to organizations that have existing programs to which AmeriCorps members will be an enhancement or expansion. In other words, if anyone has evaluated your program formally, please include that evaluation in the application. If you want more information, read on.

Typically, **program evaluations** are comprehensive measures of the impact of the entire program and may measure many different outcomes – some that focus on **program processes** and their outcomes (the methods of program service delivery, i.e., are the client intake procedures efficient? How frequently does staff interact with clients? In what settings? For what purposes?) and some focus on **program activity outcomes** (How well does the reading program work? Are students really learning to read better? Is student interest in reading greater?). Also, program evaluations are usually conducted by independent, objective third parties (students at a local college or university, an independent consultant hired by the board or a funder).

The **Performance Measures Worksheet** seeks to capture the one or two (or three) key outcomes that you would like to measure over time. These outcomes or results are the changes you expect to see happen as a result of your program in the immediate future (outputs), the near future (intermediate outcomes) or in the distant future (long term or end outcomes), are linear and directly connected to the activities you expect AmeriCorps members to perform.

**Q. We are trying to figure out if the member support costs are based on the housing contribution to the living allowance or the total living allowance per MSY.**

A. The member support costs are based on the total living allowance per MSY.

## **SUMMARY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONFERENCE CALLS**

**December 6-7, 2005**

### **Q. Is the operating grant budget just for the 10 volunteer stipend supports?**

A. No, the operating grant budget includes all of the expenses normally associated with a program – facilities, supplies, materials, technology, training, travel, evaluation, staff salaries and benefits, et al. Volunteer stipend support is another term for member living allowance – it refers to the monthly stipend AmeriCorps members receive to pay for living expenses, such as food, clothing, shelter and transportation.

### **Q. What are the budget parameters for submission of a planning grant proposal? Which budget do we use for the planning grant?** I know we do not include member costs within the planning year, but I'm unable to locate specific instructions related to the necessary forms, data etc. desired for review.

A. The budget forms, and all other application forms, are located in the appendices. These documents are PDF files that can be downloaded to your computer from the OFBCI website: [http://www.in.gov/ofbci/funding/2006\\_AmeriCorps\\_Appendices.pdf](http://www.in.gov/ofbci/funding/2006_AmeriCorps_Appendices.pdf).

Applying for planning grants involves following the instructions on pages 23-24 of the application instructions to produce a narrative, and then completing the forms from the appendices.

### **Q. What's the difference between AmeriCorps "State" and AmeriCorps "National" grants?**

A. The Corporation for National and Community Service ("the Corporation") provides opportunities for organizations to apply directly to them for funding. These grants are called "National" grant awards and have specific provisions and requirements. Many national organizations, such as Big Sisters Big Brothers or Boy Scouts of America, with sites in multiple states often apply for funds. It is not necessary to inform the OFBCI of your interest in applying for these grants. The AmeriCorps STATE grants are funds received by the OFBCI from the Corporation for distribution to organizations within Indiana.

Each state has the flexibility to adapt or develop a unique application and review process. In Indiana, the application requirements for both grants are virtually identical, but the grant review process is different.

### **Q. I thought at the workshop that you said a match was not required for the planning grant, but the text of the application implies a 33% match. Could you confirm this requirement?**

A. You are correct. At the workshop, the planning grants were marketed as requiring no match, but that information was incorrect. The planning grants do require a 33% match from the applicant, but the match can be either cash OR in-kind.

### **Q. If you apply and are granted an award, can you partner up with someone else and "subcontract" with them, particularly an experienced organization?**

A. Yes. Partnerships are encouraged.

## **SUMMARY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONFERENCE CALLS**

**December 6-7, 2005**

**Q. Do renewing applicants sent our applications to you first also before entering on eGrants?**

A. Really, this is referring to two processes: the application content and the application submission process.

First, the content: All applicants that have completed their 3-year grant cycle and will be in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of a new grant cycle in 2006 should refer to the New/Recompete application instructions to guide the development of the application. All applicants that will be in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year of their 3-year grant cycle should look to the "Continuation" application instructions for guidance in developing the content of their grant application. Current planning grant awardees should refer to the New/Recompete application instructions for guidance.

Second, the submissions process: All current grantees, including planning grantees, and regardless of the funding year, should submit their applications to OFBCI through eGrants.